the construction of buildings of doubtful utility. From time immemorial the taluks of Tovala, Agastiswaram, Eraniel and Kalkulam were exempted from the payment of contribution towards the expenditure on account of the construction or maintenance of minor irrigation works, and this practice was re-affirmed by Government in their order No. 6757/L. R & F., dated the 22nd June 1913. In the circumstances, it was unjustifiable on the part of the Government to require those taluks also to pay a portion of the expenditure on minor irrigation works. He prayed that no such arrangement might be brought into force, although individual ryots here and there might have agreed to it in a spirit of despair. He then described the activities of Assistant Tahsildars in the matter of removal of encroachments on *poramboke* lands and pointed out that the so-called *porambokes* on the banks of rivers, etc., were not really so, and that they should be registered in the names of the owners of adjoining lands. In respect of the general question of enhancement of the material prosperity of the people, it was the Member's view that natives of the country should be appointed as Dewans, as they alone could be expected to be conversant with the habits of the people and realise their wants and wishes. Foreign Dewans who were appointed from the British Indian Service strove to act up to the standards of the administration there, which could not be imported into Indian States without destroying their individuality and traditions. To preserve the individuality of the State unimpaired, to have collective deliberation and responsibility, to secure continuity of policy and to act as a check on the autocratic ways inseparable from the system of one-man administration, the Member pleaded that it was essential that the State should have an Executive Council to help the Dewan. Lastly, the Member animadverted in some detail on the educational policy of the Government resulting in the recent enhancement of fees and the consequent strike of school-boys.

Dewan's reply.—I must express my thanks to you for the very kind way in which you have responded to my wishes to keep to the time allowed by the rules. One grave defect in the existing practice regarding the S. M. P. Assembly is that, in regard to subjects for discussion, at any rate in regard to subjects of such great importance as the one about which you have chosen to speak, Government do not get any statement in advance of the points which you propose to raise in your discussion, and Government are accordingly at a great disadvantage inasmuch as they do not know what the points are that they have to meet. I must therefore plead my inability to give a detailed answer at present to your valuable discussion in the course of which you have touched on many important points of detail. Further, finance is a subject so vast and important that I do not think that it would be unfair to you if I do not make an immediate reply in regard to it. Yesterday, in my address, I referred to the policy that the Government are pursuing in regard to finance. I am not in a position to add anything to it just now. The several points, especially that relating to the evening bazaars you have referred to in your speech, will receive consideration. It is quite possible that in regard to the carrying out of the measures which are promulgated by Government, there are many defects. The particular defects pointed out by you in the administration of Governmental measures will be looked into.

2. State Finance.

Mr. N. Kunjan Pillai (Member, Municipal Council, Colachel) observed that the abnormal increase in the revenues of the State from 1080 M. E. had been brought about by imposing additional burdens on the people and not by a profitable exploitation of the resources of the State such as forests, etc. The amount of revenue as distributed among the people stood at Rs. 5 per head in Travancore, whereas it was only Rs. 3½ in Hyderabad and Rs. 3 in Mysore. The people of this country were very poor, 66 per cent of them being agriculturists; and their average annual income as *per* the figures of the Census of 1911 was only Rs. 14 per head against Rs. 30 in British India. The activities in the direction of company promotion in the State by no means went to show that the people were well-off. People took shares in Companies by selling or pledging their properties, lured by advertisements as to the rates of dividend, etc., and it was only when an

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enquiry was made as to how many share-holders had paid even their first or second instalment of dues that the truth could be known. So far as the Government were concerned, they had no accurate data to gauge the actual average income of the people. The Member next pointed out that some of the benevolent provisions of the Royal Proclamation of 1061 M. E. such as the reduction of one-tenth of the total area for purposes of assessment and the classification of soils into thirteen *tharams*, were modified by subsequent orders of Government in the matter of assignment of *puduval* lands, much to the hardship of the ryot population. Similarly, the enhancement of the rates of *tharavila*, *thadivila*, and assessment was also productive of considerable grievance to the people of the country. The old salutary rule that lands should not be registered in favour of foreigners without the permission of Government was abrogated about 15 years ago and this rendered it possible for non-Travancoreans to elbow out the sons of the soil. He, therefore, urged that the registry of lands to non-Travancoreans should be forbidden, that if some lands were registered in their favour, the extent as well as the duration of enjoyment of such lands should be limited, and that the rates of *tharavila* and *thadivila* to foreigners should be in excess of those allowed to Travancoreans. He also objected to the disposal of *puduval* lands by auction and proposed that lands should be divided into very small blocks so as to admit of poor people also sharing the benefit of the Puduval Rules. As regards the Excise revenue, the Member stated that the policy of the Government should be to increase the sale price of liquor and to reduce the number of shops with a view to discourage consumption of liquor, while in regard to salt, the duty should be lessened so as to increase the consumption of the article. He also urged that effective arrangements should be made to enhance the production of local salt. Taking up education, the Member said that the large increase of expenditure under that head was mainly due to the introduction of the Education Code of 1084, though strongly objected to by the people at the time. The question of educational expenditure was carefully investigated by the Committee appointed for that purpose and it was not clear why its recommendations were not accepted by the Government. The holding of a separate Conference by Government after the Committee had submitted its considered report could not be justified. Speaking of the students' strikes, the Member said that both parties were at fault and that it would be well to pardon the erring students. Next, taking up minor irrigation works, the Member submitted that Government did not devote adequate attention to them and that the policy outlined by the Dewan in his opening address to the Members of the Assembly in 1096 had not been given effect to. The expenditure on the Public Works Department did not increase *pari passu* with the increase in the revenues of the State. The Department was considerably overstaffed and there was a great deal of leakage under the head of temporary establishment. The Member contended that the Government should not make any profit from the administration of justice and regretted that this principle was not kept in view by them when they recently increased the process and copying fees. The Member next said that the Government were not quite correct in stating that the Kodayar channel works in South Travancore were complete. He pointed out that, though it might not be possible to take up the question of the right bank channel, there were several items of work still remaining to be done in respect of the left bank channel. The channel intended to be opened to Pattanam had not yet been commenced by Government, but its opening was essential as more than 2,000 *kottahs* of existing paddy lands, not to speak of conversions, would be benefited by the scheme.

In the matter of retrenchments to be effected the Member urged that Government should not be guided by the opinions of Heads of Departments alone and that it would be advantageous, if Government themselves decided upon the staff, etc., required for each Department and directed the Heads of Departments to carry out those decisions. He also submitted that, as Government were aware, the appointment of Assistant Tahsildars was not a satisfactory arrangement and that the procedure adopted by them was a fruitful source of annoyance to the ryots.

Dewan's reply.—I am labouring under the same difficulty as I did in regard to the representation of Mr. Kumara Pillai. First of all, you have quoted

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figures in regard to the incidence of taxation ; and, secondly, you have spoken about the earning capacity of the people here and elsewhere. Whether these figures can bear examination and whether the several arguments you have put forward are sound or fallacious are matters which cannot be answered without an amount of study and scrutiny which you cannot expect me to make on the spur of the moment. I have noted your objection to auction sale in *puduval* cases ; and I shall consider it very carefully. I think you are right in emphasising the need for retrenchment. I will only request you to wait and see what the Government are going to do in this direction.

3. A fair, equitable and efficient administration of the State Finance.

Mr. Krishnan Madhavan (Member, Karunagapalli Taluk) submitted that the finances of the State could not be considered satisfactory or their distribution among the different Divisions and Departments adequate, and that the revenues were not being spent to the best advantage of the people. While observing that more funds were needed to meet the requirements of a progressive administration, the Member pointed out that there was no possibility of raising more money from the people, as all sources of income had already been tapped, and that it was, therefore, highly necessary to scrupulously avoid all extravagant and wasteful expenditure, including the creation of new offices. Out of a gross revenue of Rs. 198 lakhs, as much as a sum of Rs. 62½ lakhs was spent upon the public service in Travancore. Such a large expenditure would not be necessary, if sons of the soil were appointed to all responsible posts. There were duly qualified men in the country to fill all such places and the only thing needed was to give them an opportunity for service. The pay of most of the officers in Travancore was very high, compared with that obtaining in Japan. It was pointed out that the appointment of Assistant Tahsildars served no useful purpose. The Public Works Department was overmanned and the retrenchments recommended by the Salaries Committee should be given effect to. He observed that there was a great deal of waste in that Department, as could be proved by the enormous profits earned by contractors. It was a pity that there was no competent officer in the Secretariat to scrutinise the estimates of the Department. Again, the amounts allowed for the maintenance of village roads were extravagant; this item of expenditure might well be avoided altogether and the funds utilised for the construction of new roads. The charges on account of the maintenance of public buildings were also needlessly heavy, while the allotment for the construction of roads was inadequate. Supplemental estimates and memos of cost which tended to increase the original estimates should not be sanctioned. The charges on tools and plant were very heavy, since the materials were now ordered from foreign countries at enormous cost. All those materials could well be manufactured in the local P. W. D. Workshop itself. A proper re-adjustment of the jurisdiction of P. W. D. Officers might be effected. For instance, it would be more convenient and less costly to place the Attingal Sub-Division under the Trivandrum Division instead of under the Nagercoil Division. The Member, in passing, requested Government to take over the maintenance of the Panmana road which had been opened to a length of 4 miles by the people.

In the administration of criminal justice, Police Officers should be made to realise that the Magistrates were not dependent on them; there was therefore the need for the equalisation of the salaries of the Magistrates with those of Circle Inspectors of Police, so that the work of these officers might be carried on in concord and amity. The post of Circle Inspectors of Police should be abolished in the Divisions in which they were still allowed to continue. In the Excise Department a Reserve Inspector was not necessary to be in charge of the uniforms, etc., of the Excise subordinates and there was no necessity for a Circle Officer and a Manager in the Excise Commissioner's Office. There were too many Sirkar Vakils and yet separate vakils were engaged for conducting Government cases. This was an unnecessary and wasteful system. As a measure of local relief the Member suggested that the Sastamkotta lake which inundates the paddy fields below could be made useful by the diversion of its water westward through a feeder channel about one furlong long. He also pointed out that the want of capital from which many an enterprising Travancorean

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